



Literacy Links

November, 2006
Volume 3, Number 3

Monthly E-Newsletter of Maine Reading First



Upcoming Events

April 25, 2007 ~
1st Annual Nonfiction Institute, "Using Nonfiction in the Classroom", with award-winning nonfiction author Penny Colman. Held at Jeff's Catering in Brewer. Sponsored by the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development—Literacy Unit; Contact Theresa McMannus at 581-2441 for registration information

Spotlight on...

Using Assessment to Guide Instruction

"Teaching without assessment is like driving a car without headlights." (Big Ideas in Beginning Reading, 2005). Ongoing assessment offers a direction of what to include in instruction so it effectively meets the needs of students. There are many assessment tools currently being used to measure students' reading performance although the process of using the assessment data to inform instruction may not be as widely used.

Assessment tools can be sorted into four main categories:

1. **Screening**~Screening assessment tools are administered to determine which students are at risk for experiencing difficulty with reading and who may need extra support.
2. **Progress Monitoring**~Progress monitoring assessment tools are administered to determine if students are making adequate progress or need more support to achieve grade-level reading outcomes. These measures can be administered frequently (weekly, bimonthly, monthly) to check that students are making adequate progress.
3. **Diagnostic**~Diagnostic assessment tools are administered to help teachers better plan instruction for students who may be struggling with reading by providing in-depth information about students' skills and instructional needs.
4. **Outcome**~Outcome assessment tools are administered to provide a bottom-line evaluation of the effectiveness of a school's reading program and student achievement throughout the duration of the school year.

Establishing an assessment system which includes using a variety of assessment tools on an ongoing basis insures that students' reading development is regularly and accurately monitored. The question of "How can student data be used to improve teaching and learning?" can guide the analysis, interpretation, and application of student data in order to best meet the specific needs of students. Data can be used to identify and determine:

- grouping arrangements which most effectively address students' current level of reading
- design of instructional lessons
- content of instructional lessons (What skills and strategies are identified on the assessment as needing explicit instruction, reteaching, or reinforcement?)
- frequency, duration, and intensity of lessons
- progress of students

Using ongoing assessment to check on whether students are making adequate progress helps ascertain if modifications should be made regarding grouping or design of instructional lessons.

Save the date!

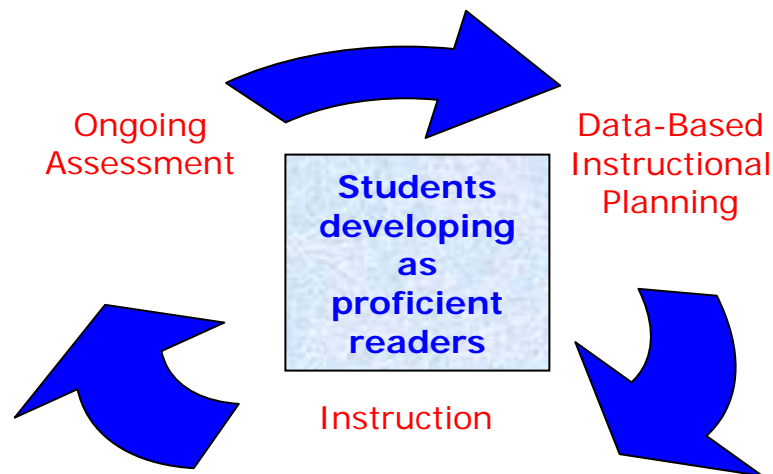
Those of you who attended the Maine Reading First Summer Institute in June may be excited to hear that Jo Robinson will be returning to Maine. A conference with Jo Robinson on differentiating instruction and implementing literacy centers will be held in the Portland area on May 30 and repeated in the Bangor area on June 1. Stay tuned for more details...

Looking Ahead to Fall 2007~

The New England Reading Association (NERA) Annual Conference will be coming back to Maine next year! The 2007 Annual Conference will be held at the Augusta Civic Center on September 27-28.



The diagram below illustrates the cycle of administering assessments, providing instruction, and using the data to guide or modify instruction. Regularly-scheduled grade-level team meetings are a powerful mechanism for bringing teachers together to have conversations about data and how to apply it to instruction.



Description of Instructional Idea...

Choral Reading

In addition to exposing students to a wide variety of texts while modeling the enjoyment of reading, choral reading is an instructional technique which focuses on reading fluency. During a choral reading of a text, teachers are able to model fluent reading with appropriate rate, expression, intonation, and pitch. Short, simple texts which students can read are appropriate for use in choral reading lessons. Also, consider selecting texts which can be 'brought to life' during a choral reading such as poems or songs. Choral reading can occur with large groups, small groups, or pairs. After listening to the text read aloud, students join in and read the text together. Choral reading provides readers who may struggle with the opportunity to hear a model of fluent reading and read aloud segments where they feel comfortable. Echo reading is a version of choral reading where one reader (or a group of readers) reads a segment of text and the remaining readers then echo the first readers by reading the same segment.

Summary of Professional Literacy Text...

I've DIBEL'd, Now What?

A common question from teachers who are using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) as an assessment tool is "What do I do with the DIBELS results?". This professional resource answers this question in great detail. (For more information on DIBELS, refer to the December 2005/January 2006 edition of *Literacy Links* which included a "Spotlight on DIBELS".) Part I of *I've DIBEL'd, Now What?* addresses the features of intervention instruction and part II includes intervention activity ideas categorized by each of the seven DIBELS subtests. This book is framed by the underlying purpose of using assessment to guide instruction and encourages teachers to analyze students' performance on DIBELS at a deeper level in order to effectively group students and design intervention plans which target

Read To Me

Read to me riddles and
read to me rhymes,
Read to me stories of
magical times.
Read to me tales about
castles and kings.
Read to me stories of
fabulous things.
Read to me pirates and
read to me knights,
Read to me dragons
and dragon-book fights.
Read to me spaceships
and cowboys and then,
when you are finished -
please read them
again.

Jane Yolen



*"Merely assessing and
not using the data to
inform instruction is a
waste of time.
Teachers need to know
how to use the data."*
Susan Hall, *I've DIBEL'd,
Now What?*, p. 2

specific student needs.

I've DIBEL'd, Now What? by Susan Hall was published in 2006 by Sopris West Educational Services. The ISBN is 1593184972. This text can only be ordered from Sopris West Educational Services at the following website <http://www.sopriswest.com>

Children's Literature Title...

The Gingerbread Girl

Written and illustrated by Lisa Campbell Ernst

The adventures of the Gingerbread Man and his scuffle with the fox are well-known by many readers. Children (and adults) who were troubled by the demise of the Gingerbread Man in the classic tale will delight in this new book. After many years of longing for the Gingerbread Man, the lonely old woman and man reluctantly decide to bake another gingerbread cookie. They are confident that making a girl this time will avoid a repeat of the same situation as before. Just after cooking, the spunky Gingerbread Girl jumps out of the oven and darts off, determined to outsmart the fox. Will the Gingerbread Girl be successful with her revengeful plan? Read to find out. The Gingerbread Girl was published in 2006 by Dutton Children's Books and the ISBN is 0525476679.

News from Maine Reading First...

- The Maine Department of Education will not be holding a Maine Reading First subgrant competition this school year. Questions related to this can be directed to Patrick O'Shea at Patrick.O'Shea@maine.gov or Lee Anne Larsen at LeeAnn.Larsen@maine.gov


Check it out...

KinderKorner is an Internet website packed with resources for educators at the PreK-2 levels. This website includes resources such as lists of read-aloud books, professional literacy texts, poems and songs, and literacy center ideas. Some of the resources are available for download and use at no charge while others require payment. The website address is <http://www.kinderkorner.com>

Newsletter Archives

There are several earlier editions of *Literacy Links* available at <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>

Edition	Spotlight Topic
March, 2005	Maine Reading First
April, 2005	Maine Reading First Course
May, 2005	Reading Fluency
June, 2005	Vocabulary
September, 2005	Phonemic Awareness
October, 2005	Phonics
November, 2005	Comprehension
December, 2005/January, 2006	DIBELS
February, 2006	Literacy Centers
March, 2006	Interactive Read Aloud
April, 2006	Nonfiction
May, 2006	Word Walls
June, 2006	Classroom Design

	September, 2006	Shared Reading
	October, 2006	Automaticity
	For additional information about any of the items in this newsletter or to sign up to receive this e-newsletter, please email janet.trembly@maine.gov	
	Click here to view the Maine Reading First website http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm	
	The professional development opportunities and materials are listed in <i>Literacy Links</i> for informational purposes only and are not necessarily endorsed by the Maine Department of Education's Maine Reading First Initiative.	